

# ***2001 Annual Report Highlights***

For the second consecutive year, Cambridge recorded an increase (although minimal) in serious crime in 2001. The Crime index total rose by 26 incidents, a one percent spike when compared with the 2000 total. This slight increase should be tempered by the fact the 2001 crime total of 4416 incidents represent the third lowest index reported in the City since 1965. The Serious Crime Index in Cambridge has not varied from a final count of between 4350 and 4450 incidents for five consecutive years.

While there was a two percent increase in property crime in 2001, the ten percent decrease in violent crime drove the total of Murder, Rape, Robbery, and Aggravated Assault to their lowest combined total in forty years. For the first time since 1960, there were fewer than 500 violent crimes recorded during the calendar year.

## **Murder**

- There was one murder recorded in Cambridge in 2001. On January 7, 2001, Cambridge police and fire units responded to an apartment in Jefferson park. When officers arrived they found an 11-month old baby unresponsive and not breathing. The baby was transported to the hospital and later died. An autopsy determined that the injury was consistent with "shaken baby" syndrome. Subsequently, the father of the infant was arrested and charged with the murder of his daughter.
- Murders in Cambridge usually fall into three situational types: domestic, drug or gang related, and homeless against homeless.
- Cambridge averaged 4.5 murders per year between 1960 and 1989. The average dropped to two homicides annually for the decade of the 1990s. There has been one murder in each of the first two years of the new Century.

## **Rape**

- This index crime increased by four incidents in 2001. Last year's total of 11 rapes was the lowest number for this crime in Cambridge since 1975. Between 1970 and 2000, Cambridge has averaged 33 rapes per year.
- The 15 rapes included four acquaintance rapes, four domestic rapes, one "blitz"-style street rape, and one incident classified as a home invasion.
- In an average year, investigators clear 70 to 80 percent of all reported rapes. This year, the Sexual Assault Unit cleared 82% of the cases

## **Robbery**

- From 1970 to 1990, Cambridge averaged 100 commercial robberies annually. Starting in the early 1990s that number began to swiftly plummet until a forty year low of 18 incidents were recorded in 1999. This trend was reversed in 2001 and a 48 % increase to 34 commercial robberies was recorded. A contributing factor to this increase was a spree of post 9/11 bank robberies.
- After years of steady decline, street robbery recorded its lowest total in over forty years as 147 incidents were recorded.
- Area 4 (-31%) and Riverside (-48%) both registered dramatic decreases in street robbery in 2001.

## Aggravated Assault

- Aggravated assaults continue to drop with a 16% reduction recorded in 2001. Assault totals peaked in 1993 when 643 incidents were reported. Over the past eight years, this violent crime has been in a steady decline with 2001 count of 272 aggravated assaults, the lowest total since 1986.
- Domestic altercations accounted for 27% of all aggravated assaults, followed by juvenile/gang related incidents, which comprise 13% of the reports.
- The following are a few of the assault trends observed in 2001: Juvenile assaults in the vicinity of the Galleria; Bar related fights on Cambridge Street; Traffic and Parking altercations in Central Square; assaults of the homeless in Harvard Square.

## Burglary

- The most startling number to emerge from the analysis of the 2001 crime statistics is the 44% increase in housebreaks. There were 134 additional breaks in Cambridge in 2001 when compared to the 2000 figures. This is the largest annual increase in housebreaks we have recorded in thirty years. Further analysis is needed to determine if this is just a statistical blip or the emergence of a major trend.
- Commercial breaks declined 20% in 2001 and have decreased over 60% from the early 1990s. The most dramatic decrease in commercial breaks this year was in the Kendal/MIT business district. The ongoing problem of construction site breaks in this area was eradicated with the arrest of a professional burglar and the number of breaks fell from 23 in 2000 to 3 in 2001.
- Every neighborhood in the city registered an increase in housebreaks in 2001 with the exception of MIT and the Highlands

## Larceny

- Larceny is the most frequently reported Part I Crime, accounting for 62% of the Serious Crime Index in Cambridge each year. Within the next decade we can expect larceny to increase and produce the most patterns
- Larceny is broken into nine sub-categories. The four classifications that recorded increases in 2001 were: Larceny from persons (+9%), theft of services (+61%), and from motor vehicles (+6%), and Shoplifting (+24%).
- Nearly seventy percent of the larcenies of company property from offices involve the theft of laptop computers.
- Larcenies of diners' property continue to be a problem in the Harvard Square business district. Thieves steal wallets from coats and purses hanging over, or sitting under, the diners' chairs.

## Auto Theft

- 88% of the vehicles stolen in Cambridge have been recovered. As in past years, a high percentage of the recoveries were in the Dorchester and Roxbury sections of Boston
- For the past several years, late model Camrys, Accords, Corollas, and Civics have topped the ticket as the most stolen vehicles.
- The Cambridgeport neighborhood reported a 25% increase in 2001. The parking garages on Memorial Drive were hit hard. The thefts were concentrated on weekends with a high percentage of the vehicles recovered in Boston with extensive body and ignition damage.
- Eighteen autos were reported stolen from parking lots along Rindge Avenue.